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PATENT APPLICATION

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. 200207438-1IN THE  
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor(s): Michael C. Robinson et al.

Confirmation No.: 7237

Application No.: 10/633,804

Examiner: Paul Kim

Filing Date: August 4, 2003

Group Art Unit: 2161

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents  
Commissioner For Patents  
PO Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

## TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF

Transmitted herewith is the Appeal Brief in this application with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on January 14, 2008.☒ The fee for filing this Appeal Brief is \$510.00 (37 CFR 41.20).☐ No Additional Fee Required.

(complete (a) or (b) as applicable)

The proceedings herein are for a patent application and the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a) apply.

☐ (a) Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 (fees: 37 CFR 1.17(a)-(d)) for the total number of months checked below:☐ 1st Month  
\$120☐ 2nd Month  
\$460☐ 3rd Month  
\$1050☐ 4th Month  
\$1640☐ The extension fee has already been filed in this application.☐ (b) Applicant believes that no extension of time is required. However, this conditional petition is being made to provide for the possibility that applicant has inadvertently overlooked the need for a petition and fee for extension of time.Please charge to Deposit Account 08-2025 the sum of \$ 510. At any time during the pendency of this application, please charge any fees required or credit any over payment to Deposit Account 08-2025 pursuant to 37 CFR 1.25. Additionally please charge any fees to Deposit Account 08-2025 under 37 CFR 1.16 through 1.21 inclusive, and any other sections in Title 37 of the Code of Federal Regulations that may regulate fees.☐ A duplicate copy of this transmittal letter is enclosed.☐ I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:  
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Typed Name: Scott A. Lund

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Rev 10/07 (Ap/Brief)

Respectfully submitted,

Michael C. Robinson et al.

By: 

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MAR 27 2008

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Examiner: Paul Kim

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**APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.37****Mail Stop Appeal Brief – Patents**

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir/Madam:

This Appeal Brief is submitted in support of the Notice of Appeal filed January 14, 2008, appealing the rejection of claims 1-9, 11-17, and 21 of the above-identified application as set forth in the Final Office Action mailed September 12, 2007.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is hereby authorized to charge **Deposit Account No. 08-2025** in the amount of **\$510.00** for filing a Brief in Support of an Appeal as set forth under 37 C.F.R. § 41.20(b)(2). At any time during the pendency of this application, please charge any required fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Appellant respectfully requests consideration and reversal of the Examiner's rejection of pending claims 1-9, 11-17, and 21.

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

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Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Real Party in Interest.....	3
Related Appeals and Interferences.....	3
Status of Claims .....	3
Status of Amendments .....	3
Summary of The Claimed Subject Matter .....	3
Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal.....	6
Argument .....	6
Conclusion .....	12
Claims Appendix .....	13
Evidence Appendix.....	19
Related Proceedings Appendix.....	20

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

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Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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**REAL PARTY IN INTEREST**

The real party in interest is Hewlett-Packard Development Company, LP having a principal place of business at 20555 S.H. 249 Houston, TX 77070, U.S.A. (hereinafter "HPDC"). HPDC is a Texas limited partnership and is a wholly-owned affiliate of Hewlett-Packard Company, a Delaware corporation, headquartered in Palo Alto, CA. The general or managing partner of HPDC is HPQ Holdings, LLC.

**RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES**

Appellant submits that there are no related appeals or interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the decision in the pending appeal.

**STATUS OF CLAIMS**

Claims 1-9, 11-17, and 21 are pending in the application (see Claims Appendix), and are the subject of the present Appeal. Claims 10 and 18-20 were previously cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 1-17 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuchiya US Patent No. 6,950,864 in view of Essential SNMP, by Douglas Mauro et al., and in further view of "Official Notice". [*Appellant notes that claim 10 was previously cancelled without prejudice.*]

The amendment filed August 15, 2007 is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) as introducing new matter into the disclosure.

**STATUS OF AMENDMENTS**

No amendments have been entered subsequent to the Final Office Action mailed September 12, 2007. The claims listed in the Claims Appendix, therefore, reflect the claims as of September 12, 2007.

**SUMMARY OF THE CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER**

One aspect of the present invention, as claimed in independent claim 1, provides a method for accessing a database of interest (48). The method includes a management application (44) creating (10) a first object for indicating a unique identifier identifying a data

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

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Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

item, with creating the first object using a first SET command; and an agent (46) receiving the unique identifier from the management application and storing (12) the unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database (50) which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable with the management application, wherein the agent (46) is distinct from the restricted intermediate database (50) and the database of interest (48).

Within the method, the management application creating (14) a second object for indicating a data type for the data item, with creating the second object using a second SET command; the agent receiving the data type from the management application and storing (16) the data type in the restricted intermediate database; the management application creating (18) a third object for indicating an action to be performed on the data item with respect to the database of interest, with creating the third object using a third SET command; the agent receiving the action from the management application and issuing (20) an action command to the database of interest to perform the action on the data item, wherein the agent uses the stored unique identifier, the stored data type, and the action in issuing the action command; and the agent receiving (22) a response to the action command from the database of interest and sending (24) the response to the management application (see, e.g., FIGS. 1-3; page 2, line 14- page 3, line 12; page 3, line 13- page 4, line 11; page 4, lines 12-24).

One aspect of the present invention, as claimed in independent claim 7, provides an apparatus for accessing a database of interest (48). The apparatus includes a first network device (44) providing a management application; a second network device operatively coupled to the first network device; and an agent (46) configured to monitor the second network device; wherein the management application of the first network device is configured to: create (10) a first object for indicating a unique identifier for a data item using a first SET command, create (14) a second object for indicating a data type for the data item using a second SET command, create (18) a third object, using a third SET command, for indicating an action to be performed on the data item with respect to the database of interest, and receive (22) a response to an action command to perform the action; and wherein the agent is further configured to: receive the unique identifier from the first network device and store (12) the unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database (50) which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable with the management application, receive the data type from the first network device and store (16) the data type in

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

the restricted intermediate database, receive the action from the first network device and issue (20) the action command to the database of interest to perform the action on the data item using the stored unique identifier, the stored data type, and the action, and receive the response from the database of interest, and send (24) the response to the first network device, wherein the agent (46) is distinct from the restricted intermediate database (50) and the database of interest (48) (see, e.g., FIGS. 1-3; page 2, line 14- page 3, line 12; page 3, line 13- page 4, line 11; page 4, lines 12-24).

One aspect of the present invention, as claimed in independent claim 15, provides an apparatus for accessing a database of interest (48). The apparatus includes a network management station (44); a device operatively coupled to the network management station; and an agent (46) programmed to monitor the device; wherein the network management station is programmed to: create (10) a first object for indicating a unique identifier identifying a data item using a first SET command, create (14) a second object for indicating a data type for the data item using a second SET command, create (18) a third object, using a third SET command, for indicating an action to be performed on the data item with respect to the database of interest, and receive (22) a response to the action; and wherein the agent is further programmed to: receive the unique identifier from the network management station and store (12) the unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database (50) which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable by the management application, receive the data type from the network management station and store (16) the data type in the restricted intermediate database, receive the action from the network management station and issue (20) the action command to the database of interest to perform the action on the data item using the stored unique identifier, the stored data type, and the action, and receive a response to the action command from the database of interest, and send (24) the response to the network management station, wherein the agent (46) is distinct from the restricted intermediate database (50) and the database of interest (48) (see, e.g., FIGS. 1-3; page 2, line 14- page 3, line 12; page 3, line 13- page 4, line 11; page 4, lines 12-24).

One aspect of the present invention, as claimed in independent claim 21, provides a computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions for performing a method of accessing a database of interest (48). The method including a management application (44) creating (10) a first object for indicating a unique identifier identifying a data item, with

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

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Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

creating the first object using a first SET command; an agent (46) receiving the unique identifier from the management application and storing (12) the unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database (50) which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable by the management application, wherein the agent (46) is distinct from the restricted intermediate database (50) and the database of interest (48). Within the method, the management application creating (14) a second object for indicating a data type for the data item, with creating the second object using a second SET command; the agent receiving the data type from the management application and storing (16) the data type in the restricted intermediate database; the management application creating (18) a third object for indicating an action to be performed on the data item with respect to the database of interest, with creating the third object using a third SET command; the agent receiving the action from the management application and issuing (20) an action command to the database of interest to perform the action on the data item, wherein the agent uses the stored unique identifier, the stored data type, and the action in issuing the action command; and the agent receiving (22) a response to the action command from the database of interest and sending (24) the response to the management application (see, e.g., FIGS. 1-3; page 2, line 14 - page 3, line 12; page 3, line 13 - page 4, line 11; page 4, lines 12-24).

**GROUND OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL**

Appellant seeks review of the rejection of claims 1-17 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuchiya US Patent No. 6,950,864 in view of Essential SNMP, by Douglas Mauro et al., and in further view of "Official Notice". [*Appellant notes that claim 10 was previously cancelled without prejudice.*]

**ARGUMENT**

**I. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103**

**A. Applicable Law**

Under 35 U.S.C. §103, the Examiner has the burden to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 1074, 5 USPQ2d 1596, 1598 (Fed. Cir. 1988). Three criteria must be satisfied to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. First, the

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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Examiner must show that some objective teaching in the prior art or some knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art would teach, suggest, or motivate one to modify a reference or to combine the teachings of multiple references. *Id.* Second, the prior art can be modified or combined only so long as there is a reasonable expectation of success. *In re Merck & Co., Inc.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Third, the prior art reference or combined prior art references must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). These three criteria are also set forth in M.P.E.P. §706.02(j). Even when obviousness is based on a single reference, there must be a showing of suggestion or motivation to modify the teachings of that reference. *In re Kotzab*, 55 USPQ2d 1313, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 2000). In performing the obviousness inquiry under 35 U.S.C. §103, the Examiner must avoid hindsight. *In re Bond*, 910 F.2d 831, 834, 15 USPQ2d 1566, 1568 (Fed. Cir. 1990), *reh'g denied*, 1990 U.S. App. LEXIS 19971 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

**B. Rejection of claims 1-17 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)**

Because the rejection of claims 1-17 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuchiya US Patent No. 6,950,864 in view of Essential SNMP, by Douglas Mauro et al., and in further view of "Official Notice" fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the rejection of claims 1-17 and 21 is not correct and should be withdrawn.

[Appellant notes that claim 10 was previously cancelled without prejudice.]

Independent claim 1 includes "an agent receiving said unique identifier from said management application and storing said unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable with the management application," wherein "the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest."

Independent claim 7 includes "an agent configured to monitor said second network device," wherein "said agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest."

Independent claim 15 includes "an agent programmed to monitor said device," wherein "said agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest."



**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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Independent claim 21 includes **"an agent receiving said unique identifier from said management application and storing said unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable by the management application,"** wherein **"the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest."**

Independent claims 1, 7, 15, and 21, therefore, each include an agent (1) receiving a unique identifier for a data item, a data type for the data item, and an action to be performed on said data item from a management application or network device/management station, (2) storing the unique identifier and the data type in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable with/by the management application, and (3) issuing an action command to the database of interest to perform the action on the data item using the stored unique identifier, the stored data type, and the action, whereby the agent (4) receives a response from the database of interest and sends the response to the management application or network device/management station, and wherein the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest.

With respect to the cited references, Appellant submits that these references, individually or in combination, do not disclose a method for accessing a database of interest as claimed in independent claim 1, do not disclose an apparatus for accessing a database of interest as claimed in independent claim 7, do not disclose an apparatus for accessing a database of interest as claimed in independent claim 15, and do not disclose a computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions for performing a method of accessing a database of interest as claimed in independent claim 21.

Regarding the Tsuchiya reference, the Examiner appears to correlate management table 20 and table managing section 22 of the Tsuchiya reference to the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest of independent claims 1, 7, 15, and 21. Appellant notes, however, that management table 20 and table managing section 22 of the Tsuchiya reference are both part of object managing section 19, and that object managing section 19 is part of control processing section 17 which, in turn, is part of SNMP agent 14 (see, e.g., FIGS. 1, 3, 4, and 5). Thus, management table 20 and table managing section 22 of the Tsuchiya reference are both part of SNMP agent 14. Management table 20 and table

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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managing section 22 of the Tsuchiya reference, therefore, are not distinct from SNMP agent 14.

More specifically, in the Advisory Action mailed December 7, 2007, the Examiner contends that the management table 20 and manage section 22 of the Tsuchiya reference are distinct from the agent (Advisory Action, Continuation Sheet). Yet, the Examiner recognizes that "the management table 20 and table managing section 22 are both part of the object manage sectoin [*sic*] 19, which is part of the control processing section 17 of the SNMP agent" (emphasis added) (Advisory Action, Continuation Sheet). In addition, the Examiner contends that the restricted intermediate database (identified by the Examiner as management table 20) and the agent software for collecting data from the restricted intermediate database "may be held in the SNMP agent" (emphasis added) (Advisory Action, Continuation Sheet). With this rationale, however, Appellant questions how the agent can be distinct from the restricted intermediate database if the restricted intermediate database (i.e., management table 20) is "held in the SNMP agent." Appellant, therefore, submits that management table 20 and table managing section 22 of the Tsuchiya reference are not distinct from SNMP agent 14.

Accordingly, Appellant submits that the Tsuchiya reference does not disclose an agent (1) receiving a unique identifier for a data item, a data type for the data item, and an action to be performed on said data item from a management application or network device/management station, (2) storing the unique identifier and the data type in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable with/by the management application, and (3) issuing an action command to the database of interest to perform the action on the data item using the stored unique identifier, the stored data type, and the action, whereby the agent (4) receives a response from the database of interest and sends the response to the management application or network device/management station, and wherein the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest.

In view of the above, Appellant submits that the Examiner has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness of independent claims 1, 7, 15, and 21, and submits that independent claims 1, 7, 15, and 21 are each patentably distinct from the cited references. Furthermore, as dependent claims 2-6 further define patentably distinct independent claim 1,

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
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Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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dependent claims 8, 9, and 11-14 further define patentably distinct claim 7, and dependent claims 16-17 further define patentably distinct claim 15, Appellant submits that these dependent claims are also patentably distinct from the cited references. Appellant, therefore, respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 1-17 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is not correct and should be withdrawn, and submits that claims 1-9, 11-17, and 21 should be allowed.

## **II. Claim Objections**

Although an objection, and not a rejection, regarding the amendment filed August 15, 2007 as being objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) as introducing new matter into the disclosure, Appellant submits that the limitation "wherein the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest" does not introduce new matter into the disclosure and submits that the agent being distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest is supported by the original disclosure.

Appellant notes that information contained in any one of the specification, claims or drawings of the application as filed may be added to any other part of the application without introducing new matter. See M.P.E.P. § 2163.06.

In this instance, the agent being distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest is illustrated, for example, in Fig. 3. More specifically, Fig. 3 illustrates First Network Device 44, Agent 46, Database of Interest 48, and Restricted Intermediate Database 50. As illustrated in Fig. 3, Agent 46 is clearly distinct from Database of Interest 48 and Restricted Intermediate Database 50.

In addition, with reference to Fig. 1, the Specification, at page 2, line 26 - page 3, line 12, provides that:

*An agent stores the unique identifier in the restricted intermediate database (12)....The management application creates an object for indicating the data type of the data item, e.g., numerical value or string (14). The agent stores the data type of the data item in the restricted intermediate database (16). The management application creates an object for indicating an action to be performed on the data item with respect to the database of interest, e.g., retrieval of the data item from the database of interest, addition of the data item to the database of interest, or use of the data item to change data in the database of interest (18)....The agent issues a command to perform the action (20). The agent receives a response to the command*

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

(22). *The agent sends the response to the management application (24) (emphasis added).*

Furthermore, with reference to Fig. 3, the Specification, at page 4, lines 12-24, provides that:

*...a first network device 44 is operatively coupled to a second network device (not shown), and an agent software program 46 is programmed to monitor the second network device. First network device 44 is programmed to create a first object for indicating a unique identifier for a data item, to create a second object for indicating a data type for the data item, to create a third object for indicating an action to be performed on the data item with respect to the database of interest 48, and to receive a response to an action command to perform an action on the data item with respect to the database of interest 48. Agent 46 is programmed to store the unique identifier in restricted intermediate database 50, to store the data type in restricted intermediate database 50, to issue the action command [to the database of interest 48], to receive the response [from database of interest 48], and to send the response to the first network device (emphasis added).*

Thus, the agent (e.g., Agent 46) stores information (e.g., the unique identifier and the data type) in the restricted intermediate database, issues the action command to the database of interest, receives the response to the action command from the database of interest, and sends the response to the management application/first network device. As such, the agent facilitates communication between and among the restricted intermediate database, the database of interest, and the management application/first network device, and provides access to the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest for the management application/first network device. The agent, therefore, is a distinct entity facilitating communication between and among and providing access to the restricted intermediate database, the database of interest, and the management application/first network device.

In view of the above, Appellant submits that that the original disclosure does provide a basis for the agent being distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully submits that the limitation "wherein the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest" may be added to the claims without introducing new matter. Appellant, therefore, respectfully requests that the objection to the claims be reconsidered and withdrawn.

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

**CONCLUSION**

For the above reasons, Appellant respectfully submits that the art of record neither anticipates nor renders obvious the claimed invention. Thus, the claimed invention does patentably distinguish over the art of record. Appellant, therefore, respectfully submits that the above rejections are not correct and should be withdrawn, and respectfully requests that the Examiner be reversed and that all pending claims be allowed.

Any inquiry regarding this Appeal Brief should be directed to either Nathan R. Rieth at Telephone No. (208) 396-5287, Facsimile No. (208) 396-3958 or Scott A. Lund at Telephone No. (612) 573-2006, Facsimile No. (612) 573-2005. In addition, all correspondence should continue to be directed to the following address:

IP Administration  
Legal Department, M/S 35  
HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY  
P.O. Box 272400  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80527-2400

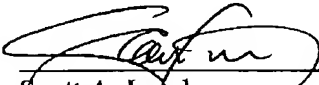
Respectfully submitted,

Michael C. Robinson et al.,

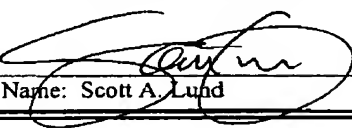
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott A. Lund  
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**CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.8:** The undersigned hereby certifies that this paper or papers, as described herein, are being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Fax No. (571) 273-8300 on this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2008.

By   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name: Scott A. Lund

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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**CLAIMS APPENDIX**

1. (Previously Presented) A method for accessing a database of interest, the method comprising:

a management application creating a first object for indicating a unique identifier identifying a data item, said creating said first object using a first SET command;

an agent receiving said unique identifier from said management application and storing said unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable with the management application, wherein the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest;

said management application creating a second object for indicating a data type for said data item, said creating said second object using a second SET command;

said agent receiving said data type from said management application and storing said data type in said restricted intermediate database;

said management application creating a third object for indicating an action to be performed on said data item with respect to the database of interest, said creating said third object using a third SET command;

said agent receiving said action from said management application and issuing an action command to the database of interest to perform said action on said data item, wherein said agent uses said stored unique identifier, said stored data type, and said action in issuing said action command; and

said agent receiving a response to said action command from the database of interest and sending said response to said management application.

2. (Original) The method recited in claim 1, wherein said response indicating success is said data item.

3. (Original) The method recited in claim 1, wherein said response indicating failure is an error message.

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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4. (Original) The method recited in claim 1, wherein  
said action is a returning to said management application of said data item from the  
database of interest, and  
said action command is a GET command.
5. (Original) The method recited in claim 1, wherein  
said action is a storing of said data item in the database of interest;  
said action command is a fourth SET command; and  
further comprising:  
said management application creating a fourth object for indicating an actual value of  
said data item to be stored in the database of interest.
6. (Original) The method recited in claim 1, wherein  
the database of interest is a restricted database.
7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for accessing a database of interest, the  
apparatus comprising:  
a first network device providing a management application;  
a second network device operatively coupled to said first network device; and  
an agent configured to monitor said second network device;  
wherein said management application of said first network device is configured to:  
create a first object for indicating a unique identifier for a data item using a first SET  
command,  
create a second object for indicating a data type for said data item using a second SET  
command,  
create a third object, using a third SET command, for indicating an action to be  
performed on said data item with respect to the database of interest, and  
receive a response to an action command to perform said action; and  
wherein said agent is further configured to:

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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receive said unique identifier from said first network device and store said unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable with the management application,

receive said data type from said first network device and store said data type in said restricted intermediate database,

receive said action from said first network device and issue said action command to the database of interest to perform said action on said data item using said stored unique identifier, said stored data type, and said action, and

receive said response from the database of interest, and send said response to said first network device,

wherein said agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest.

8. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 7, wherein  
said action is a returning to said first network device of said data item from the database of interest,  
said action command is a GET command, and  
said response is said data item.
9. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 7, wherein  
said action is a storing of said data item in the database of interest,  
said action command is a fourth SET command, and  
said first network device is further programmed to create a fourth object for indicating an actual value of said data item to be stored in the database of interest.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 7, wherein  
said second network device is a monitored device.
12. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 7, wherein



**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

said response indicating success is said data item.

13. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 7, wherein said response indicating failure is an error message.
14. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 7, wherein the database of interest is a restricted database.
15. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for accessing a database of interest, the apparatus comprising:
  - a network management station;
  - a device operatively coupled to said network management station; and
  - an agent programmed to monitor said device;wherein said network management station is programmed to:
  - create a first object for indicating a unique identifier identifying a data item using a first SET command,
  - create a second object for indicating a data type for said data item using a second SET command,
  - create a third object, using a third SET command, for indicating an action to be performed on said data item with respect to the database of interest, and
  - receive a response to said action; andwherein said agent is further programmed to:
  - receive said unique identifier from said network management station and store said unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable by the management application,
  - receive said data type from said network management station and store said data type in said restricted intermediate database,
  - receive said action from said network management station and issue said action command to the database of interest to perform said action on said data item using said stored unique identifier, said stored data type, and said action, and

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

receive a response to said action command from the database of interest, and send said response to said network management station,

wherein said agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest.

16. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 15, wherein said action is a returning to said network management station of said data item from the database of interest,

said action command is a GET command, and  
said response is said data item.

17. (Original) The apparatus recited in claim 15, wherein said action is a storing of said data item in the database of interest, and said action command is a fourth SET command, and said network management station is further programmed to create a fourth object for indicating an actual value of said data item to be stored in the database of interest.

18-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) A computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions for performing a method of accessing a database of interest, the method comprising:

a management application creating a first object for indicating a unique identifier identifying a data item, said creating said first object using a first SET command;

an agent receiving said unique identifier from said management application and storing said unique identifier in a restricted intermediate database which is distinct from the database of interest and to which access is unavailable by the management application, wherein the agent is distinct from the restricted intermediate database and the database of interest;

said management application creating a second object for indicating a data type for said data item, said creating said second object using a second SET command;

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

---

said agent receiving said data type from said management application and storing said data type in said restricted intermediate database;

said management application creating a third object for indicating an action to be performed on said data item with respect to the database of interest, said creating said third object using a third SET command;

said agent receiving said action from said management application and issuing an action command to the database of interest to perform said action on said data item, wherein said agent uses said stored unique identifier, said stored data type, and said action in issuing said action command; and

said agent receiving a response to said action command from the database of interest and sending said response to said management application.

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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**EVIDENCE APPENDIX**

None.

**Appeal Brief to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
of the United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Appellant: Michael C. Robinson et al.

Serial No.: 10/633,804

Filed: August 4, 2003

Docket No.: 200207438-1

Title: COMPUTER DATABASE ACCESS

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**RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX**

None.